

**COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS  
DEPARTMENT OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND ENERGY**

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**KEYSPAN ENERGY DELIVERY  
NEW ENGLAND**

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**D.T.E. 06-48**

**RESPONSES OF  
KEYSPAN ENERGY DELIVERY NEW ENGLAND<sup>1</sup>  
TO REQUEST FOR INFORMATION**

On May 19, 2006, the Department of Telecommunications and Energy (the “Department”), pursuant to G.L. c. 164 § 105A, issued an order opening an investigation designed to establish standards by which operators comply with the mandates of Massachusetts G.L. 164 § 116B (“Section 116B”).<sup>2</sup> Section 116 B, enacted on January 1, 2003, provides that:

*Whenever the Commonwealth or a city or town undertakes the repair of streets, roads or sidewalks the appropriate gas company shall provide for the maintenance and improvements of its gate boxes located in the streets, roads or sidewalks to be repaired, so that the gate boxes are more easily and immediately accessible. A gas company may apply for funds under chapter 90 to assist in paying the costs of the maintenance and improvement.*

In order to assist the Department with its investigation, gas companies were directed by the Department to provide information concerning its current practices regarding gate box<sup>3</sup> maintenance and improvement on or before June 6, 2006. Specifically the Department requested that Companies provide the following : (i) The relevant portion of the operators O&M Plan that ensures compliance with Section 116B (ii) An excel spreadsheet of service territory streets that

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<sup>1</sup> The gas companies in Massachusetts that operate under the name of KeySpan Energy Delivery New England are: Boston Gas Company, Colonial Gas Company and Essex Gas Company.

<sup>2</sup> Order, at 3.

<sup>3</sup> For purposes of these responses, consistent with the Department’s Order at page 2, the term “gate box” is intended to be synonymous with the term “distribution valve” as defined in 49 C.F.R. Part 192 § 192.181.

were paved in 2005, and the date that the gate boxes were made “easily and immediately accessible”, (iii) The relevant portion of the operator’s O&M Plan that delineates policies concerning how operator employees collect data to ensure compliance with Section 116B, (iv) All relevant evidence that operators are in compliance with Section 116B, and (v) All relevant evidence that demonstrates that all valves on its mains and all curb valves on its service lines are immediately and readily accessible. Responses to each of these requests are provided below.

**❖ Please provide the relevant portion of the operators O&M Plan that ensures compliance with Section 116B.**

Attachment 1 is a copy of O&M Plan section MAIN -5195 Raising Main Valve Boxes.

Attachment 2 is a copy O&M Plan section SERV-5130 Raising Curb Boxes.

**❖ Please provide an excel spreadsheet of service territory streets that were paved in 2005, and the date that the gate boxes were made “easily and immediately accessible”.**

Attachment 3 is a list, by town, of gate boxes adjusted as a result of state or municipal paving projects in calendar year 2005.

**❖ Please provide the relevant portion of the operator’s O&M Plan that delineates policies concerning how operator employees collect data to ensure compliance with Section 116B.**

The manner in which KeySpan collects data for purposes of complying with Section 116B is not contained in its O&M Plan. To comply with Section 116B KeySpan proactively determines which streets in its service territory are being resurfaced by, but not necessarily limited to, the following means:

- ❖ The Company solicits, by annual letter sent to each city and town, the municipalities' plans for re-surfacing its streets and the limits for re-surfacing within those streets. The Company also requests confirmation of those streets that were actually repaved during the prior calendar year.
- ❖ KeySpan's Area Field Coordinators and Field Supervisors engage in dialogue with municipalities to determine streets scheduled for re-surfacing that were unanticipated under municipalities' annual plans.
- ❖ Company supervisors and field inspectors involved in actual or potential cast-iron gas pipe encroachments by excavators contact municipalities and contractors and advise Area Field Coordinators of streets that are planned for re-surfacing.
- ❖ Dig Safe notifications may, at times indicate that streets will be resurfaced.

In addition, subsequent to the enactment of Section 116B, KeySpan created a new job classification of Paving Inspector to identify and document gate boxes impacted by street paving projects, to determine paving contractor schedules and timelines and to conduct follow up inspections to ensure that identified gates are properly raised. Attachment 4 is a copy of the duties for the position of Paving Inspector at KeySpan.

- ❖ **Please provide all relevant evidence that operators are in compliance with Section 116B.**

The responses to the three questions above demonstrate that KeySpan has appropriate policies, procedures and practices in place relative to compliance with Section 116B. As indicated on Attachment 3, in 2005, KeySpan adjusted approximately 9,200 gate boxes as a result of state or municipal repaving projects.

**❖ Please provide all relevant evidence that demonstrates that all valves on its mains  
and all curb valves on its service lines are immediately and readily accessible.**

In accordance with applicable federal and state regulations, it has been, and continues to be, KeySpan's policy and practice to install all required main valves and curb valves in readily accessible locations and to record those locations on the appropriate maps and field records such that they are easily identifiable and accessible by KeySpan personnel. KeySpan also, identifies certain valves as "Primary Valves" spaced so as to reduce the time to shut down a section of main in an emergency pursuant to 49 C.F.R 192.181. Primary Valves are checked and serviced on annual basis in accordance with 49 C.F.R. 192.747. Finally, , in accordance with Section 116B, whenever, KeySpan is aware of a state or municipal street paving project, it takes the necessary steps to ensure that any main valves or curb valves impacted by the paving project are appropriately adjusted so that they are immediately and readily accessible.

KeySpan appreciates the opportunity to assist the Department in its efforts to establish reasonable and appropriate standards to ensure that operators are able to comply with the mandates of Section 116B. KeySpan looks forward to the upcoming public hearing and intends to submit additional comments to the Department by the comment deadline of June 29, 2006.

Respectfully submitted,

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